



AVON AND SOMERSET CONSTABULARY

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Assistant Chief Constable Stephen Cullen

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PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

Sue Mountstevens
Police and Crime Commissioner
Avon and Somerset

Our Ref: SC/hn

12 July 2019

Dear Sue

RE: Avon and Somerset response to OPCC Police Powers Scrutiny Panel Report following a review of a Taser incident in Bristol on 14 January 2017.

I'm writing in response to the OPCC Police Powers Scrutiny Report following a review of an incident involving the use of a Taser in Bristol on 14 January 2017.

The Constabulary is committed to delivering outstanding policing for everyone. We recognise how important our legitimacy is with all our communities and welcome open and transparent scrutiny from the public, the OPCC and the Police Powers Scrutiny Panel.

We have worked collaboratively with the OPCC and the Police Powers Scrutiny Group over time and I apologise if the panel felt we were not as responsive as they would have liked. I welcome the opportunity to respond to the report, in doing so, I note and accept the recommendations.

Recommendation 1

A senior officer (SO) should be appointed to draw up and oversee the implementation of a plan to improve communities' trust in the ASC. This SO should report to the highest level of both the PCC and the ASC. The SO would produce an action plan with objectives, drawing together all the initiatives and providing a description of what success looks like. There should also be a regular review and progress report. Equality Impact Assessments should be used throughout this process to minimise the risks of institutional discrimination.

Contents of this plan could include:

- Regular engagement with those communities which have less trust and confidence in the ASC.
- Targeted surveys within these communities. Comparisons should then be drawn between these surveys and the broader surveys by the PCC.
- Focus groups to be conducted in the community to report on any change in the community's trust in the ASC. In particular, canvassing those members of the community whose trust was shaken by the above January 2017 Taser incident.
- Ensuring that supervisors make it clear that fulfilling the ASC's 'mission, vision and values' commitment is an absolute requirement and any undermining of these aims will have adverse consequences for the officers concerned.
- Setting time lines (short, medium and long term) within which identified targets need to be achieved.
- Measuring progress using both quantitative and qualitative data.

Response

As the Assistant Chief Constable for Neighbourhood Policing, I have a responsibility to improve trust and confidence within our communities. My work is directed by our [Inclusion and Diversity Strategy](#) led by Deputy Chief Constable Sarah Crew.

The strategy provides a long term commitment with the following objectives:

- An inclusive culture
- A diverse workforce
- Inclusive practices
- Inclusive services
- Community engagement

In order to accelerate towards achieving our objectives, we have the following ‘five big initiatives’ which are progressing at pace:

- External accreditation for diversity and inclusion via the National Equality Standard
- A three tier approach to embedding inclusion and diversity through learning
- Strengthening our capability to attract diverse talent, investing in more outreach workers
- Recruiting for difference by changing the way we think and act in our recruitment processes
- Mobilising the whole workforce to be excited, motivated and proud to join our staff networks, to speak out for diversity and feel comfortable and empowered to become allies in building our diverse and inclusive organisation

Engagement and focus groups

- We are privileged to serve many diverse communities and are committed to strengthening our legitimacy, particularly with those communities who may have less trust and confidence in policing. In support of this I have appointed a small team led by a Temporary Chief Inspector to map our current engagement with diverse communities to identify where we may have gaps or opportunities to do more.
- We have a strong Neighbourhood offering, particularly in East Bristol where the incident in the report took place. Working with the local commanders the T/Chief Inspector is dedicating his time in this area to listen, understand and engage. He takes part in a regular community meeting which centres around six themes of:
 - Trust and Culture
 - Complaints
 - Cultural Intelligence, Unconscious Bias, Institutional Racism and Training
 - Recruitment
 - Young People
 - Communication
- This focussed work has been complemented with an investment to refresh and reinvigorate our Independent Advisory Groups (IAGs). Led by the Strategic IAG Chair, this work has resulted in a more representative profile and the introduction of Mosque, Women’s and Young People’s IAGs.

Targeted surveys

- The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner closely monitors confidence and satisfaction levels across all communities in Avon and Somerset. In addition to formal surveys and the Police Powers and Scrutiny Group feedback, views are also received from the Independent Custody Visitor Scheme, Independent Residents Panel, an Independent Out of Court Disposal Scrutiny Group as well as,

anecdotally, from the general public at PCC Forums and 'Drop In' sessions. This feedback is constructively shared with the Constabulary and embedded within our policing response.

Mission, Vision, Values

- The Chief Constable has made it clear there is no place for racism, discrimination or inequality within the Constabulary.
- To ensure there is clarity of this strategic intent a new Mission, Vision and Values were launched in November 2018. We will serve, protect and respect all communities to deliver the vision of outstanding policing for everyone. We will be Caring, Courageous, Inclusive and Learning.
- We have an established leadership strategy that supports our workforce, through coaching and mentoring, to challenge unacceptable or inappropriate behaviour and attitudes which do not align with our values.
- How individuals, teams, and the wider organisation live the values is monitored closely via the Standards and Confidence meeting led by DCC Sarah Crew. This meeting takes into account data and intelligence to identify emerging themes and trends directing strategic intervention where necessary.

Measuring progress

- Using data analytics the Inclusion and Diversity Strategic Steering Group will develop, and monitor, qualitative and quantitative data. This information is focused on key areas of concern for our communities including how representative we are, hate crime, stop search and the use of force.
- We have clear lines of accountability where I report to the Deputy Chief Constable, who as chair of the Inclusion and Diversity Board reports on behalf of the Constabulary to the PCC at the Police and Crime Board where there is a quarterly agenda item.

Recommendation 2

Ensuring that front line officers are up-to-date with their Cultural Competency Training.

Response

As part of our strategy we're committed to a three tiered approach to embedding inclusion and diversity through learning.

Tier 1 is currently being delivered by a specialist external provider to all senior and middle managers across the organisation. This cultural intelligence programme, piloted in Bristol with partners and key stakeholders has already been delivered to over 100 staff and Police Officers. The feedback from participants has been overwhelmingly positive.

Tier 2 is aimed to support frontline officers, staff and volunteers. This is in design stage and is likely to be delivered by a range of different providers offering diverse cultural insights and perspectives. We recognise the frontline are key in delivering our service and how they understand, support and engage in the equality and diversity agenda is the difference between success and failure of the overall ambition. The intention is whatever intervention is designed, it is as collaborative, intelligent, dynamic and engaging as possible to really win 'hearts and minds'.

Tier 3 is aimed to support new Student Officers undertaking the Police Constable Degree Apprenticeship (PCDA) which began in May 2019 at the University of the West of England. There will be close links between our approach to Tier 2 and Tier 3. The PCDA curriculum itself will allow for a greater emphasis on inclusion and community engagement.

Recommendation 3

Reviewing protocols, procedures and training so that officers correctly identify individuals, who are to be arrested or served with warrants.

Response

We aim to provide the best possible data, intelligence and information 24/7 to all our officers and staff so they can make informed 'real time' decisions.

We have made the decision to provide front line officers with mobile biometric technology to enable real time identification in the field. This will be procured and rolled out over the coming 12 to 18 months.

Local Neighbourhood Policing Teams are in the best position to understand the communities they serve and are more likely to have knowledge of those individuals we may wish to speak to. In recognition of this I have directed that it will be local policing teams who assume primacy for the execution of warrants.

Stop search training has been delivered to Response Officers. This programme of work included an invaluable contribution from Desmond Brown, the Vice Chair of the OPCC Police Powers Scrutiny Group.

The increasing use of Body Worn Video and the constructive feedback we receive on a regular basis from the OPCC Police Powers Scrutiny Group promotes learning and increases our transparency.

Recommendation 4

Reviewing protocols, procedures and training in how to de-escalate situations in order to minimise the use of force.

Response

Building upon the existing national conflict resolution programme, we have committed to designing and delivering an additional bespoke development package for all frontline officers. This is to help them consider choices, consequences and recognise the importance of cultural competence and communication. This programme is in design phase with delivery planned for the autumn of this year. The programme will include learning from recent critical incidents, amplifying the importance of de-escalation. I would welcome the insight and support of the OPCC Police Powers Scrutiny Panel as we take this forward.

Recommendation 5

Developing processes during recruitment that enable the assessment of candidate attitudes towards equality and diversity

Response

Our overarching recruitment strategies follow nationally approved standards and robustly test attitudes to equality and diversity. We engage with the NPCC, College of Policing, partners and lay members of the community in support of our recruitment processes.

Equality Impact gets reviewed at different points of the Police Officers and PCSO recruitment process.

We monitor recruitment of Police Officers and PCSOs by protected characteristics at each point of the process to identify if there appears to be any disproportionality in the process. This is monitored over time so trends can be observed and consideration given to putting in place any mitigating action if appropriate.

We have recently further invested and recruited eight BAME outreach workers to support our attraction and recruitment strategy. This recruitment process identified a number of other people with valuable insight, experience and difference to support the Constabulary moving forwards.

I trust this response builds upon our dialogue over recent months, provides more information and offers a degree of reassurance.

Yours sincerely

Assistant Chief Constable Stephen Cullen
Neighbourhoods, Partnerships & Response
Avon and Somerset Constabulary

CC: *John Smith, OPCC*
CC Andy Marsh, ASC
DCC Sarah Crew, ASC